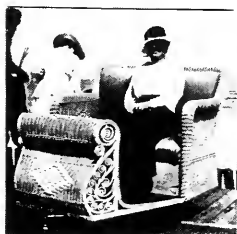


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AUBADE

Mary Washington College
Volume XVI

Fredericksburg, Virginia
1986

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Cover Design: photo by Steve Griffin

The Melcher Prize is given to the outstanding contribution of
artwork by a Mary Washington College Student.

The Chandler Prize is given to the outstanding contribution of
literature by a Mary Washington College student.

Au•bade /ō-bäd/ n [Fr.] 1. a song or poem greeting the dawn 2a: a morning love song b: a song or poem of lovers parting at dawn 3: morning music.

—Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

Return to Koubliget

Reeled into years of reflections
by unseen wooden hands,
they bring me back to
Koubliget.
I have to leave me,
to run and rear in the
fields of amethyst
with laughter.

A slip of my mind,
trying to pass
where blackboard roads
lead from a mouldy city
to Koubliget.
Where . . .
Apple cheeks and
rubber screams from sneaker bottoms
while amethyst horses run
backwards
around a popcorn square.
One-limbed dolls and noseless
clowns greet evergreen
elephants en route to nowhere.

Janette Breen

Ruth

My Dad was the nicest guy
But Ruth in all her batty repetitive splendor
finally broke him down.
We sat at Anne's house in Jersey. Ruth had a
Catholic Digest with her.
She had been reading it since 1971.
(Sometimes she'd look at me and smile with
those clacking dentures and say
"Isn't it a shame that Bishop Sheen died?" I'd
just grin back and eat
the macaroni and cheese that never had
enough cheese.)
Dad was watching TeeVee, and sitting on the
new ottoman modular couch
that Anne always raved about.
Ruth asked Dad, "So Jim, where do you live."
He said, "Oh in Virginia,
Ruth dear."
Two minutes later she asked again, "So where
do you live, Jim."
He responded politely, "Uhh, I live in Virginia,
Ruth."
This kind of question and answer exercise
went on about 15 or 30 minutes.
Finally, my Dad could stand the inquisition
no longer and when prodded about
his whereabouts, he bellowed, "I live in
Virginia, Goddammit!"
Ruth kind of had that effect on everyone I guess.

Jim Conroy

A Cabby's Breath

I talked to a cabby
who ran aground in North Jersey
and who decided to take a vacation

Sad summers in Soho
where they'd sniff too much snow blow
and wind up with distant relations

"Smoke cigars til your dead"
he with no teeth in his head
"cause they're all man was meant to trust."

"There'll be problems with the ladies
if you get any maybe
cause your spit'll cause iron to rust"

I left him with tip
far to small for his lip
and joined the warm meltaway crowd

and he left me a touch
of the rheumatic cough
and the curses he'd breathed half aloud

Jim Conroy

Morning Glories



photograph

Gary Colson



pencil

Melanie Brown

Reparations

Your shoe-tying hands are now diseased
Your golden hair is white
Your piggy-back is crooked and hunched
Your smooth legs are covered with sinuous
veins

Your pearly whites have been replaced by
coffee stained dentures

Your bright blue eyes are a dusty gray
Your mind and memory are no longer clear
But these lifetime changes make you only
more dear

Now I will tie your shoes

And I will fix your hair

I will push your wheelchair

And help your legs to walk.

I will brush your teeth

And help your eyes to see

Because, Mother, all these things and many
more

You have done for me.

Jessica Walls

My Brother's Room

I creep into the secret forest
only when the hunter's gone.

Light spots the floor through a canopy
of elephant-ear begonia and domestic
bean plants.

Nestling in a bed smelling of hay and leather,
I watch familiar squirrels and racoons
climb the walls.

One quick, cold peek behind the dresser shows
a new slinky member
Mom hasn't seen yet.

Finally I lie back, comfortable in my borrowed
sanctuary,
dreaming to the gurgling of stream fish.

Diane Critchfield

The Shower

Loud rivers swallow our white laughter.
Blinking against the stream to watch his
Hands soap my arms, breasts, stomach—
And legs.
Quivering between cold tile and his heat—
Thick fingers comb my matted hair,
Pulling my face back for
Sloppy kisses.

Diane Critchfield

Tapping the Waters

I talk too much. My mouth never moves in rhythms and my larynx never hums, but still: I talk too much.

My life, like a Buick idling in the driveway, goes nowhere.

I hear my mother thinking how bright she is, how stubborn; she will get somewhere, she will go where I did not. My mother, my reflection—whose child am I, from whence did I spring? Ha! You deny yourself and therefore deny me. Let me be a bastard in your mind—how could I go farther than you? Possibility is not action!

She won't know me. Her life, a security blanket she could not escape: it strangles her. I don't even have that. Alone in the wide world with the seeds of my past, long since sprouted, bursting into bloom around me. (Like memories, the tree you planted for a grade-school project, now towering above you.) Possibilities, yes, but where could I go? Water too far underground to be worth tapping taps me. And here I am; drained and lost.

My years of waiting, the years of Could I? Could I? never met with an answer, not even a response—not even a lie. For all my talk, they gave me deadly silence. No real teachers in my life: only preachers with nothing to say who say it anyway. I'm tired of idling here, the sun rising and setting on the same scene; my ignition must be stuck. I'll be here til the gas runs out.

And I am talking again, dammit, clouding the air with exhaust. If God had words to say to me, I wish they would be Shut Up.

KA Johnson

What I Like in Poems

I like a poem,
When I can see Knights clash—
And feel a lance pierce my heart.
But I want poems,
Where I can see toxic waste—
And feel the mutation and de-evolution of
my body.

I like poems,
Telling of heroes—
Who controlled the destiny of the world.
But I want poems,
Telling of anti-heroes—
Whose destinies are controlled by the world.

I like a poem,
That shows how the errors of the past—
Still affect us today.
But I want poems,
That show how the errors of the present—
Will affect us tomorrow.

M. Jackson Beattie

Man on the Run



ink

Sandi Dovberg

Your Debility, My Disease

PROLOGUE:

He swung his hand and his
wedding band
struck the board like a broken
bone.

CHAPTER 1:

The air was thick (like phlegm) with
words
when our minds locked—
swarming viruses attacking the
weary-hearted
and I caught a cold: you.
I rejoiced in my disease and
you let me,
hoisting my body onto your flagpole
until I
flapped in the wind—your emblem,
your seal.
A someone to take care of.

CHAPTER 2:

I opened up to you before I
healed, believing you were my
potbellied physician (phallic
phantasy) and that I
would stay sick forever (how I longed
for a cancer, tearing at my moles,
my beauty marks).

I gave you a taste of my world—
it rises in your gorge like these
mornings do—
and all I got was foul medicine from
dusty bottles.
Yes, I'm a true junkie at heart.

Now I hunger for all of your world.
I am insatiable.
Were it in my reach, I would gulp
it in a lump—my body would
expand—
a boa constrictor
swallowing a pig.

CHAPTER 3:

I am a bitch in
your dog eat dog world and I'm
starving—you
starve me—
and still you want to devour me;
perhaps it is only the bones you are
after,
be they brittle and splintered or
pliant
like new wood.
"Fetch Fido!" (bloodless bastard),
I know you need sharp teeth,
but my marrow's nearly gone.
What will you do when the feast is
over
and the bones are merely memories?

EPILOGUE:

Ashes to ashes.
Dust to dust.
Bones to bones.
(She buries them well.)

KA Johnson

Aborigines



Apple

JJ Baker

"Crooked. No, you're still crooked. Still not right."

"How about now?"

"No, now you're still not right; You're leaning to the left, I think . . . wait . . ."

"Good God, my arms are getting tired. Can't we do this tomorrow? I'm tired. How many mirrors do you need anyway?"

"As many as I can find."

"You're crazy," she decided.

"There are many ways to see yourself," he preached.

"Oh please Eddie, give me a break . . ."

"Actually, it really depends on how sophisticated you are. Kurt Vonnegut could probably use a hundred mirrors, whereas the reflection of a very clean plate would suffice for Reagan," he explained.

"Well it looks like a disco in here. I'll help you hang this one tomorrow. I'm tired. I want to go to sleep," she explained.

"Okay," he smiled.

Absorbed in yet another dimension of his character, Eddie took a long time in the bathroom. He performed brushing his teeth for himself, and he loved it. They climbed into bed and discovered that the chilly sheets made cuddling compulsory, but his chilly hand obtruded onto her breast so she made them two separate entities. Not tonight. Darkness clicked upon them, and the room filled with the faint sounds of fierce horns of the quick and furious cab drivers running up and down Broadway chasing the midnight rush.

He pouted. But she drifted. Her mind ran up the wall and through the ceiling to the top of the building that was addressed 201 West 55th street. Trillions of lights dotted the great buildings and the labyrinth of streets that ached with tunnels bored deep inside them. Her thoughts went through the million things that she knew were happening at that moment: A young girl makes fifty dollars. A dusty old man leaves his body on the street. A marriage is consummated. A child is being touched where it makes him cry. A broker's ulcer aches. Johnny Carson pleases a blank mind. A businessman bleeds in his sink. An Italian debt is settled on the bottom of the Hudson. A nice car is enjoyed by a clever gang. A clean hole is bored through a man's head. A young writer slams down his soul on paper. Powder disappears into a hundred dollar bill. A computer talks with another computer. A poker bluff fails in a back room. Five babies are born. A stolen welfare

check is fully enjoyed. A virgin gets his money's worth. One baby turns blue. A television finds a new owner. A phone rings. A phone is busy. A woman on 55th street falls asleep.

And Susan slept. Sleep pulled her from the city and pushed her into a dream . . . A bright orange extension-cord—You know, the ones that are always on sale in the hardware department at Kmart. Attention shoppers, for the next five minutes we have a blue light special on our high quality, 50 ft., heavy duty extension-cords—7.95. And so on. Anyway, an extension-cord such as the one previously described lay in the sand of a limitless desert. Although one end was buried in the sand, the other end served as an electrical source for a very good color television made by Zenith. Six feet or so in front of the TV sat Susan totally naked in a white vinyl Lazy-boy chair. In one hand she had a TV Guide filled with blank pages, and in the other hand she had an empty glass of water. It was empty because she had drank it because the weather was par for a desert, that is, hot and dry. Susan was a fair skinned girl, but her skin was turning red. The TV was on and the show was Donohue. His guests for the day were two homosexuals who (thanks to the marvels of modern science) were about to be the first parents of a baby whose parents were both men. One of those men was definitely pregnant Susan decided. The baby would probably be around in a few weeks she guessed. Some of the housewives in the audience had some very interesting questions: Can you breastfeed too? How soon will you return to work after having the child? What will you name him? A lot of men phoned in to ask who their doctor was. The show took a station break, and when it returned, everyone had been shot dead, including the audience. On a coffee table sat Jerry Falwell with a machine gun across his lap reading his bible. Donahue had numerous red holes in him, but he was still holding his microphone. So much for the marvels of science. As for Susan, she was badly sunburned. She looked around and saw that her situation was not the best. Her body had stopped sweating, and she dried up and blew away in the limitless desert.

Susan awoke and went to the bathroom for a drink of water. She watched Eddie's nostrils flap in the winds of his snoring until she fell asleep again. Morning was introduced to her by Eddie's new watch that played the William Tell overture as an alarm. She turned to greet him but only his watch rested on his pillow. He was in his studio throwing paint at a canvas in such a way that a quality work of art would arise. She put some clothes on and went to work. Susan worked at an art gallery on 14th street. Recently the gallery had been carrying Eddie's work as a result of some intricate manipulations that few knew about. There was a recent demand in new art due to some rumors about some people who had made out well investing in new art ten years ago. Eddie's buyers speculated that he was a communist because of the heavy concentrations of red in his work. Susan would smile as she imprinted a sales slip on a Visa remembering the day Eddie came home with a case of red paint that he had bought at half price from a Puerto Rican on the corner. Communist?

Susan's spirits were low at lunch so she took the rest of the day off. On her way to the subway she saw a great sign predicting the end of the world. "It was near" the sign said. I could believe that, Susan thought to herself. But repenting was too mundane a solution, she decided. She had to get off her train three stops early due to a very drunk man expressing concern about the salvation of all the people in the car. She walked up Broadway refusing deals from young entrepreneurs. There was a foreign smell in the apartment. Susan understood when she saw a bra resting on the back of a chair and other pieces of clothing that did not belong to her or Eddie cast in a passionate pattern on the floor leading towards the bedroom. She could hear odd demands being placed above the music being played. She went to her desk and took a large envelope out and wrote "Dear Eddie, no more . . . Susan". She put the bra in the envelope and left it on the kitchen table. She was trembling badly when she shut the door quietly, and left.

Her boss did not ask questions, in Susan's eyes glistened a clear need for an extended weekend. She took the subway to Brooklyn where her car lived. She took the F.D.R. drive, then she went crosstown and escaped through the Holland tunnel. It occurred to her on the New Jersey Turnpike that she really had no where to go. Her parents were far too inquisitive these days, and the drive to Ohio was not soothing. She headed south, to Washington she figured. The sun was setting as it warmed the right side of her face. It was dark when she got to Maryland. A flashing green light pulled her over because it said "Holiday Inn" and it was something she could not refuse. Her room was comfortably clean and smelled of roses from a can. Susan got in a hot tub and sat there looking at her own body marveling at the fact that in the world there were so many bodies just like hers, not exactly like hers but, with the same basic principle: female. What the hell was Eddie so interested in?, she thought. He's too damn horny, she concluded. Susan added some tears to the hot bathwater.

A Gideon bible was strategically located on her bedside table. Susan's hand would inevitably come across it while she groped in the dark for the bedside lamp when she wakes up with a very empty feeling. So the Gideons plotted. They were right. It was 2:30 a.m. when Susan discovered that in the front of a Gideon bible was a brief listing of all the problems a human might encounter in this big world and what pages to look to find the solution. God, is it that simple? she wondered. Sure enough there were some brief optimistic verses regarding depression. She quickly looked to see if there was anything on infidelity. Boy, Eddie should read this, Susan thought. She started laughing when she realized what she was doing, and how she had fallen prey to such a ridiculous concept: a book with all the answers. So she thought. She fell back to sleep. Her dream was in black and white.

Morning was introduced to her by sunlight. Susan was not motivated to do much of anything. She turned on the TV, and found a station that didn't have any commercials on at the moment. The show

on was Donahue, and his guests for the day were two Jehovah's Witnesses explaining themselves to the inquiring minds of the audience. The two of them looked very content on the show. They had a "beats walking door to door" smile on their face. Although they could not say when, they were very sure that the world was coming to an end. They probably had been keeping up on the Arms race. Susan thought. The questions being asked were not all that interesting: "How can you, in 1985, still claim that Evolution is a scheme to deny the existence of God, and that all those great scientists are lying to us with monkey bones?" They cited verse after verse, and the show got boring.

Since Susan had forgotten to put the "Do not disturb" sign on the door, she found herself very startled by the maid who chimed in behind her, "Yes, yes, that's right brother keep talking," she noticed Susan's surprise, and said, "Sorry mam, but you didn't put the sign on the door. I just come in here to change your sheets and I couldn't help but hearing verse."

"Are you a Jehovah's Witness?"

"No. Baptist, but anyone speaking the Bible is speaking the truth."

"Oh, I see," Susan said, a little uneasy with the out-of-bounds conversation.

"You ain't Christian are you?"

"No . . ."

"I knew that. I can tell, you don't look happy. You can always tell if they don't look happy, no faith," she explained, "No faith."

"Look, I really don't need this, I . . ."

"Sure you don't need this, I'm sorry. I do take to talking too much. But I'm just trying to help. Don't tell Jesus no one ever told you about him, he knows. All I got to say is that this world is mighty out of hand. I don't know about you, but it is too much for me. The Bible can help you, it explains everything. A lot more than those crazy scientists (who you never see) who live God knows where, in some dark corner I guess, who sometimes write a book that we can't hardly understand about how we got here by chance or that we were mutants or something, they just keep making smaller and smaller calculators. Why I bought one for my little boy that fits on his little precious wrist. All this electrical stuff that I can't even understand how it works. What we going to do if all those crazy scientists die and the power goes out? They've led us into a trap, that I don't hardly understand, but I got faith. Got to. All the sinning, drugs, sex, murder, nuclear weapons. Heaven help us. I don't know anything, but I got faith. That's all I got to say. The sinners are going to burn, and the ones with faith (who don't know anything) are going to be saved. It is so simple, so cotton picking easy. Black and white."

"Very simple," Susan said.

Susan went to Washington and saw some real artwork. Art that was not so simple. Eddie's work might have been good wallpaper for the bathrooms, but it had no place on any other wall. Susan decided. She was feeling better. She had seen only half of what she had wanted to

see when the museums began to close. She chose to stay in a Ramada Inn this time. After dinner, she finished some of the work she had brought with her, and then she found herself tired enough to go to sleep. She would head back to the city tomorrow, and Eddie deal with the fact that she did not have faith in him because she knew him and so on. Sleep rinsed her mind, and produced a dream.

Yet another Donahue show was airing. Again Susan was naked but she was not in a desert. She was in a very damp forest with great trees all around her. She was hungry but the show had just started. Donahue's guests for the day were two young men who had recently been kicked out of Ivy League schools. One was a philosophy major at Dartmouth, and the other was a nuclear physics major at M.I.T. Both were accused of shooting spitballs at the professors during their senior seminars. Both claimed that they weren't the only one shooting them, and both feared what their parents were going to do to them when they found out. The question from the audience was: "Aren't you ashamed?" Then the power went on the TV and Susan found herself staring at a blank screen. She was all alone in a big forest with a TV that didn't work. She went about and gathered some firewood. She rubbed two sticks together and a flame resulted. She ate apples off the trees and warmed herself by the fire. Susan woke up feeling the satisfaction the world was missing. She did not stumble across the Gideon bible this time. She just went back to New York, the Big Apple.

Clean City, Mt. Jackson, Virginia



photo

Gary Colson

Pioneering Northern Virginia

spring houses push up through the mud
in rows, stubborn swingsets weed in between
gripping like a new neighbor's handshake

I am a mouse in a dry, hollow stalk,
bringing home bits of thread
and gum wrappers to paper the walls

I have neighbors, but hurry past them
farmers track us closely;
there is such competition

C Zavrel

As If The Reformation Let In More Light
—Grossmunster, Zurich

notice how like a sky
the ceiling is, unbroken lines
obscure nothing, open spaces
mirror a vision of heaven

other times i have sat
in places like this
alone and exactly still
how like a tomb the quiet
crowds me the ceiling
clamped down tight

still alive, i pound on the lid

C Zavrel



photo

Diedre Mosteller

Simple, four-part harmony

Do you hear it in the breeze?
Low, earth-shaking thunder
replaces my father's having sung
bass guttural dirges
to me as I slept: my head
in his lap as he sat
on the porch swing
watching the day die as usual
and contemplating
things not meant for me.

Wind rattles the windows
and rain pounds the cement
walk outside, reminding me
of baritone Uncle Bob
and tenor brother Tom,
whose memories have faded
as most classroom reveries do
when officious teachers call on you
to face classmates and friends
to define **caprice**.

My baby sister's screams
at three in the morning,
telling the neighborhood that she is
frightened by the dragon
like lightning bolts, pierce the room
where I once was soothed
by my mother, soft soprano,
who completed the quartet when
I was the baby of the house.

**Harmony: the simultaneous combination
of tones; pleasing to the ear.**

Can you hear it now? The storm
choruses, resounding in my room
drowning out the sharp
screams, the squalls
in a house that was
quiet hours before.

Bruce Van Horn

In A Third Story Apartment Across From the Victoria Theatre

They turned the marquee lights out
Eddie Murphy finished
the crowd ushered into damp
darkness not Beverly Hills
Cops casually cruise Caroline Street
wave and briefly blare sirens
another show for children

I watch the bag people
the finicky shoppers of public trash
cans, collectors of castaway dreams
come shuffling past my window
slouching, a thousand stories
slung across sore shoulders
glad their bags can carry the load

Unable to watch the silence
I turn, like a cat seeking a favorite
perch, to my cluttered kitchen table
trying not to notice the new paint
chips or the dust on the floor
and hope to catch a good rerun
Rockford Files would be fine
on my television where life is
plagued with poor reception

Bruce Van Horn

1986 Chandler Prize Winner

10th Birthday Party

1

the men came today
took them all away—
the rug, the chairs, the fish tank
the men came to say
dad forgot to pay
the loan he got from the bank

2

now sunlight falls
on these empty walls
where mom hung potted plants
the men took them all
books, bikes, and balls
they even took my jar of ants

3

my sister became a dancer
dad found god as the answer
mom was told she had cancer

4

I blew out the candles and made a wish

Bruce Van Horn

The Pretzel Family

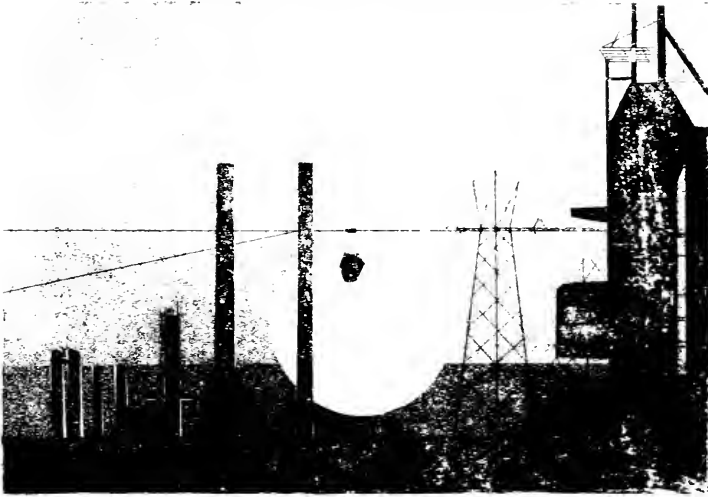
They pull up
In an army-colored car
There must be ten of them
Packed tightly among
Pretzels and frozen C&C Cola
Soon, at fifteen minute intervals
Cries of "Get yer fresh pretzels, sodies here"
Will rise above the screams
Of children running from the waves
And Yankee games tinny on transistors

But in the front seat
One is still asleep
Head lolled back against the vinyl
And One sings
With pelvic grace
He's in love, with the other woman
And the little Ones
Are fighting
About who carries
The cooler heavy with cans
Or the plastic hamper
And the Father
Just stares
With used eyes

They walk
Together
Onto the hot sand
Black skin rude
Against the Sunday bathers

Lisa Kilczewski

Industrial Landscape



intaglio

Dwyn McCormick

Stormy Weather

On a Friday
After the 9 to 5
TV dinner melting
In the microwave
Even the cat
Is distant
Quiet among the
Successful apartment
Things
Now
The computer blinks
In the corner
Waiting to balance
A checkbook
Or count calories
The Dali
Coldly
Offers an interpretation
The potted palm
Genuflects
Toward the skylight
And Lena
Richly from the speakers
Understands
After all these years.

Lisa Kilczewski

M&M's Over South America



textbook illustration and computer graphics

Steve Griffin

**Winter
for D.W.**

Black, Black Heart
 Black as coal
Like the face of one too many years seen.
 Cold, so cold
 and still so young.
My heart hangs limp
 a side of beef
 —slaughterhouse.

“Darling of course you are not the first,
 I can only pray the last,
 but a mind like mine,
well, one never knows.
Do you have any razors?
I think I need to go to the bathroom.
 No no, just go to sleep.”

Why do I feel like I need to grow up,
 or throw up,
 cash it all in?
It's time for the big bucks!

And so you sleep.
What a peaceful state
 wonderful escape,
like a beautiful landscape I saw in Paris.
Who was it now? I can't remember.
Some wonderful Frenchman,
encaptured by Italy.

“They say the state hospital has wonderful food.
Personally I have never had the pleasure,
 but one day, I am certain.”
“I have also heard that the state is the disease,
however, I am certain it is me,
unless of course, I am it's victim.”

Oh fly why do you sit there and pray,
atop a brass tray?
In which god do you seek retribution?
I'm sure you were once as me.
And which is better?
I, to my knowledge, have yet to be a fly!

How strange to lie in bed with one you love,
and yet to be so close to your most feared enemy.
I prayed for you to hit me,
perhaps I would cry.
And of course I should put the light out,
my eyes being the deceiver

Today I sat by the river,
and watched the fish weep,
which of course made the damn thing overflow
—getting my shoes wet.
Have you ever had wet feet?
For me it wasn't a first,
and bailing out was little trouble,
except of course, slipping,
landing hard on my chest,
burning it with yet another coal
from the fire.

Todd LaMontaigne

River of New Orleans

It isn't what I expected,
this Queen of American Rivers.
—gallons of extra light coffee
with metal bubbles, clamorously making
their way
here to there—it doesn't matter.
It's like everything else I guess,
when you have grandiose dreams.

I do hear workers' songs though.
From men who make this water their life.
Deep rich voices, that sing against the constant
roar
of an engine, occasional blast of a horn.

Today they look to shore,
at green pants, purple shirts.
And they laugh, or maybe cry.
I don't know for sure.

I think they would laugh though,
there is something they have.
A thought to believe in,
—a desperate blue.

Todd LaMontaigne



pencil

Karen Zahorchak

Never To Have, Never To Rest

C Zavrel

All that could be exotic, was. Home. Just. Only. Florida would have been nice. The fellows next door had asked him to spend spring break with them in Fort Meyers. Anne'll be there, they said. Searing hot sands, and a flat green ocean that would cool the burn. They said they'd be in Florida for ten days. He'd be home in Virginia.

"Now Freddie, it can't be as bad as all that can it?"

The bus was crowded. He'd had to run to catch it and there had not been alot of seats open. He sat in the last row, next to the chemical john on one side, to a black Marine on the other. Both the john and the Marine smelled like Clorox. sitting there, he tried not to breathe as he looked across the marine and out the window. Familiarity breeds contempt, he remembered his older brother telling him when he took his clothes out of the house. College will be a whole different ballgame for you, Billy, he had said. You'll come back and we won't even recognize you. Not that I expect you to be coming home an awful lot. I can't see why you'd want to, he had said, throwing the last coat onto the pile gathering in the trunk of the car.

Now, all the times he had been down this road merged into a collective vision. On 17, just south of Orange, it would turn hilly and you'd have to slow down some. Unless you were scared, or late, or if it were summer, and you had all the windows rolled down and you'd never be exactly eighteen years and two months old again. Then you would fly over these hills. They could stretch forever, or stop teasingly short. He knew this road; the whole country, but he did not want to look out the window, back up the road spilling out behind the bus. He wanted to lie on the beach next to Anne and watch her turning darker. The flat, hot moistness would reflect off the glare of thighs that smelled like coconut.

At night, she would lie on top of the sheets, still and regular; her warmth would reach him and he would touch her shoulders in the dark.

"A cold wet spring like this the year my Ginny died, Pete. Remember that? Rain took all the blossoms right off the trees. We were late swimming that year."

A row in front of him, two old men were talking. They were talking too loud for being in a crowd, even over the noise of the bus. He hated

when people did that. You couldn't help hearing them, even if you didn't want to listen. Next to him, the Marine was trying to sleep, moving his head from side to side as if there were a more comfortable place to put it. He imagined that the Marine was looking forward to being home, after being in the service and all. The two old men would probably have daughters and grandchildren waving to them at the bus station. Each one would be trying to be the one who saw Grampy first and any rain would not matter. Rain had begun to streak across the bus windows in little rivers, each with its own tributaries. He reached down between his feet and hoped that his backpack was rainproof. His shoulder nudged the Marine, who seemed to be awake immediately, grabbing the armrests of his seat as if he were looking for his gun.

"Sorry," he said to the Marine who still looked wild and murderous, "excuse me."

The Marine nodded and settled back into his seat, and he knew the crisis was past. His father had called him this morning before he had left to tell him that they would be eating dinner around six that evening.

—I probably won't be able to get down to pick you up at the bus, Billy, he had said to him, but it's not too long of a walk. You can still make it for dinner, no sweat, his father said to him before he hung up the phone.

His bus would be in at five-forty. Now it was raining harder, and cold. He would walk through the front door, or maybe the side door by the kitchen, looking like a wet cocker spaniel. Everyone would look up at him from the table and he would be late. The bus went over a pot hole, and the door to the john banged open. It banged shut and open again. No one got up to shut it.

The beach. Towels hanging from balconies like flags at a Fourth of July parade. Sand would stick to the tops of your feet and your shoulder blades; everywhere the Coppertone dog would be pulling down your suit, exposing white flesh: Florida, heat, Anne . . .

"Them Orioles are having quite a camp, yeah Freddie? Could be a hot spring for 'em."

"Only time it counts bein' hot is when it's cold, Pete," the other old man said, "September's when, old man."

He closed his eyes, to see if sleep would help. No, he could have none of it. The door of the john was still not closed and hit him in the shoulder at every bump in the road. It seemed it was like this every time he went home, and he did not feel like bothering anymore. It was cold in the bus. The air-conditioning nozzle overhead was blowing full blast into his lap. He reached up, careful not to wake up the Marine, because he was sure the Marine would kill him this time, but he could not quite reach. Just close. He pushed back into his seat, trying to hide from the cold, from the noise, and every familiar bump and dip in this road. Even with his eyes closed, he knew exactly where he was, or at least close. Just close.

—Pop, why are you up? It's Billy. I'm not that late. A couple of lousy minutes. I was close.

—Hey ya Poppy, all right if I go to Florida with the guys over break? It's only for a week. Then you guys could come down to visit me at school when I get back. Don't worry, I'll stay close.

Not close enough. There was no comfort in coming close to sleep. Still, the two old men in front of him found things to talk about.

"Almost married her too, Pete. Wanted to all right. But then our unit shipped home. Home . . . and then Ginny."

He stood up to turn off the air-conditioning, or at least re-direct it. As he stood, he felt the Marine staring up at him, maybe getting ready to say something to him, to tell him to quit moving around, to just sit down and go the hell to sleep. He wished he had done nothing about the damned air-conditioning. No movement, no waves, no contact. As he sat down, he looked at the Marine out of the corner of his eye.

"Sorry again," he said, wishing he had never gotten up.

He pulled himself as far into the aisle as he could, trying to give the Marine as much room as he could, to make up for waking him up. The Marine's eyes were dark and alert, as if he was stalking in the jungle.

"Ah, it's no bother kid. Not at deep sleeper."

The Marine's voice was deep, but softer than he had thought it would be.

"It's the service, it's the damn bugle. I'm going home though, my own bed. Yeah boy, I'm going to do some serious sleeping. You going home kid?"

His bed at home could welcome him. It would not matter what time it was. The bed would be there and it would wait. It was over in the corner of his room, and he could lie down and listen to the wind hum across the venetian blinds and he would be asleep at once.

"Kid, you going home?"

"Y'uh huh. I'm on my spring break from college."

The Marine nodded and looked out the window. Maybe he too had seen all this before, maybe it was all new. It did not matter. It was fresh.

"I'm going home too. My Mama's getting married. It'll be good getting out of that lousy Camp Lejeune."

"You'll be glad to see your family, too."

"That's right, kid. The whole mess of 'em will be there."

He would not let himself feel. You know you should respond, but can't. You hate it when you can't feel. He was almost afraid that he would try and there would be no feeling there, and he was afraid that he would find feeling there, more feeling than he had wanted to find, or at least acknowledge. There would be no tears for him when he got home, no real laughs. Home was where he was expected to be. He was not returning in any uniform, nor would he have a tan and a bag full of Florida t-shirts for his family.

"Ah, Freddie, that's it. Love. Explains everything."

The two old men had started to laugh now. They were getting louder. The bus was getting louder.

"We were in Italy . . . Rome, 1945. I was working in ordnance, and her

name was Maria. At least I called her Maria. She didn't speak a word of English, and the only Italian I knew was 'andiamo.' All the girls were named Maria. They were all so dark and warm. They were all named Maria, and they'd all lost someone."

"Or somethin', eh Fred?"

By now, they would be in Florida. He wondered what Anne was doing, who she was with. Florida would exist without him. Rain drummed on the roof of the bus as it moved deeper into the hills. Houses began to appear as the bus got closer to Orange. For all the land that stretched off to both sides of the road, the houses were crowded close to the road. As if for company. As if they were afraid they would miss something. He wondered if dinner was ready yet.

The two old men had grown serious, as if they had started drinking in the afternoon, and were sobering up too early that night.

"I didn't want to go home, Pete. God, I didn't want to go. Warm, breezy nights with Maria at that restaurant on the roof of the Hotel Bristol. Across the street, there was this old gent who used to sit out in his roof garden each evening. We'd watch him. And he had this fool cat that would walk along the railing all along the roof. We were waiting for that cat to just walk right off the roof, but he never did, at least that we ever saw. Never heard what happened to Maria. Not that I cared, ya know Pete. I had my Ginny. I took her back to Italy in 1964, and I was half looking for Maria, but it had been so long."

"Things don't work out the way you'd thought, huh Fred. The best laid plans."

"I didn't really look for her ya know, Pete. I was happy."

The Marine was up and had his duffle bag in his hand as the bus pulled into the Texaco station near the railroad tracks.

"Good talking to you kid," he said, "Need a ride anywhere, uh . . ."

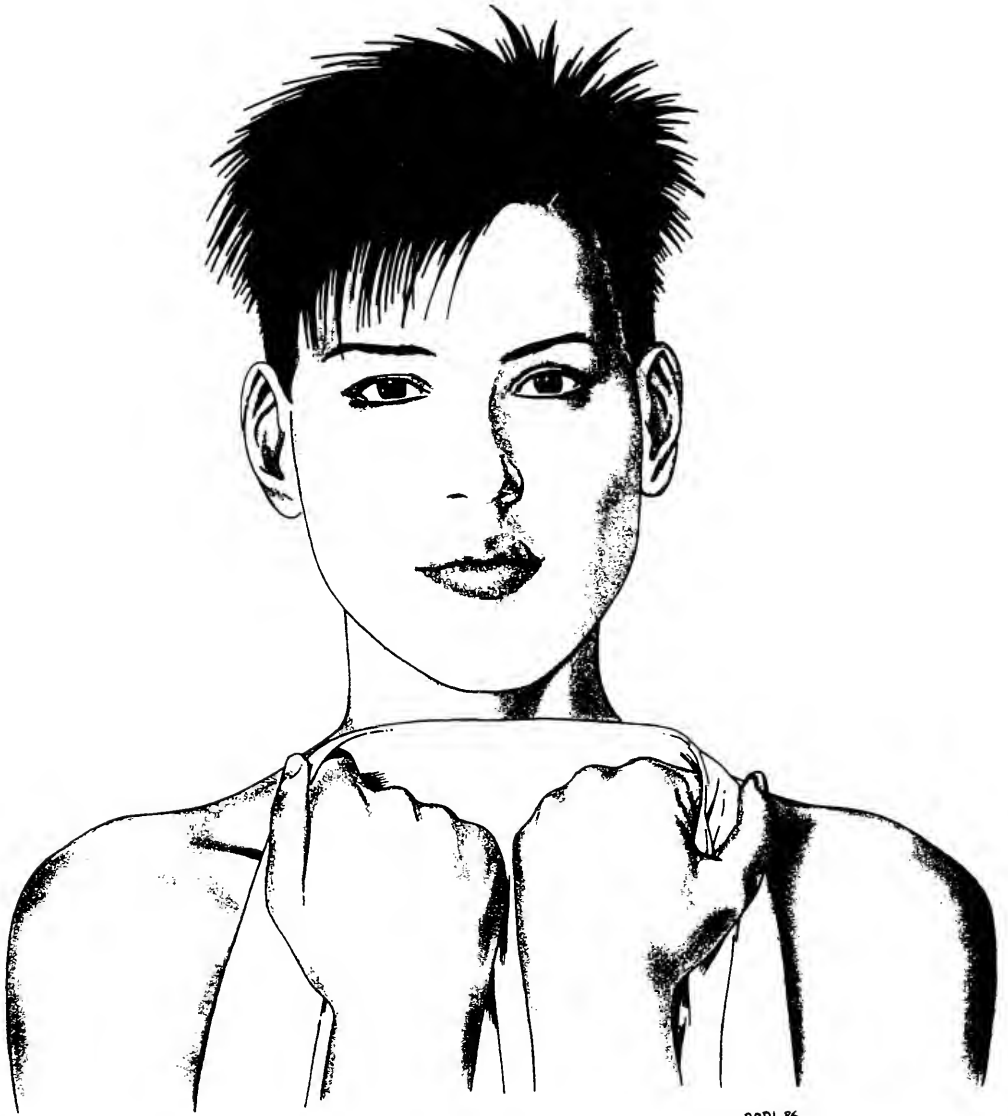
"Bill."

"Billy. Can I give you a lift somewhere?"

He looked outside. It was still raining and he had no umbrella. Above him, the sky stretched grey from that Texaco station to Fort Meyers, Florida. When it rains at a beach there is nothing to do.

"C'mon Billy. I know I hate to walk around in the rain and the cold mud back at Lejeune."

They walked over to a beat up old Oldsmobile, and got in. The ride home seemed too fast. He remembered walking along the road this way, and it had seemed to take forever. The Marine dropped him off at the bottom of the driveway, by the mailbox. On the way home, the Marine had told him about having once been caught in the rain on his motorcycle. He'd been going to pick up a date off base, but he'd had to go home and change into some dry clothes and borrow a buddy's car. He'd been real late picking her up, but that was a real long time ago, and he did not remember her name anymore.



BODI 86

pencil & ink

Mike Bodi

A Weird Sister Surfs

The black and white TV went off when
A silvery lady stepped down sleekly from her
watch over
A shifting coal bin
And the coals started to smolder scarlet-hotly

Fiery molten lava spits out
A plume of majestic magenta across the zenith
Now mars-red washes over the vista
The blaze becomes coppery in its growth
Sloe-black ink writhes under a bronze weal
It succumbs and becomes opalescent
Those emeralds and sapphires and diamonds
Collide and are resplendent in their zeal

The fire will cool
And billow forth clouds of chrome yellow smoke
The heart of the flame will turn goldfinch
Ensconced in a murmuring azure cloak

Andrea Markley

Orgasmagraphic

Precisely,
 I a r r a n g e myself
 just so.
 under the jet of spi
 ra
 ling
 water.

AcuteAbruptSevereSheerLegs

l
 The f u s
 m h
 e a
 r
 p
 e
 n
 s
 my desire—
 Waves of craving t t t a— above
 w w w me. round
 i i i below
 s r n
 t l e
 a naiad w i i
 r t n
 h g
 under Neptune.

Finally, I am marble, a r c
h
e
d in perfect death—
a stilled fountain.

Katherine Spivey

Time, Money, and Marilyn



lithograph

Heidi Reszies

Topiary

Perhaps my self-protective pruning
stunts me, keeps me petite,
dark, ever-green;

Makes of me a shrub fantastic
whimsical, grotesque
a verdant relic of antique days.

But I would reply my ruthless shears
thrust me ever-upwards to the sun,
directly pointing upwards to sky.

And all possible meanderings
of trailing mazy vines
snapped, cut, broken, torn,
to feed my greedy roots.

Katherine Spivey



pen and ink

Suzanne Moe

Females

I can feel us growing old.
Our mothers laughs come through.
We sit in the front passenger seat
on dates
just as mom sits in the station wagon.
And I, double dating with you,
Riding in the back seat with some young man,
See the back of your head
and wonder in awe if you
look exactly like your mother
sitting there
As she glances at father—
your date.
My God,
We're growing so old.
We stay up and worry about
the ones out late,
grasping our shoulders
to keep warm in old robes.
We instinctively say things she says
and unconsciously act like her at parties.
I can clearly see us all thirty,
with new carpeting underneath our feet
in our new living rooms,
and wondering what to do with our
incapacitated mothers.

Cristine Sturm

Women Walking

Bent shoulders—
Heavy heads—

Women walking,
Watching sidewalk lines
Pass beneath,
Between their feet.

Damp kleenex
Clenched
In a pale fist.

Don't step on a crack or you'll
Break
Your mother's back.

Paralysis—
Broken Bones—
Osteoporosis

Casting
Old wives' tales aside,
We step on the cracks.

Kristi Woodward

Streets in the Rain

Streets in the rain
Night flowers
Through drifting smoke
Visions borne on frozen wind
Across fragrance of evening

Voices in liquid harmony
In ancient quarters
Streets traversed
By blind radar

Dragon in fragments,
Lotus in flames,
The hot white fire
Of burning blossoms
Pale in midsummer twilight

Moon slicing eastern skies
Across silk and steel,
Jasmine and cordite,
Sliding beneath the waves
Where the glow is muted
In eternal dark rhythm

Sacrament of heat lightning
For empty rituals
Crackling through corridors
Redolent of mystery

A spine of sputtering light
Pulsating along damp walls
Exploding with silence
Across candles and solitude

Bill Saffell

418 North Washington Street

The cold, lonely days ring
with the sound of the wind
through victorian shutters.
The past comes rushing in
with memories
of laughter and warm light.

But the past does not mold the present
(or future)
and bodies cold in the ground don't care
what is torn down and what is built up.
This house rots, a relic (not) to be cried over
as it is torn down, to be forgotten
in the end, as the bodies are forgotten . . .
The ache of these walls, embedded with secrets,
echoes an opaque innocence.
The groans are a willingness to shelter warm
bodies,
share stories once again.

And yet it is taken as a hollow plea, to be
ignored when the bulldozer knocks
life out of this old building,
which has seen so much
sheltered so many
and dies so easily.

Kathleen Henderson



pen and ink

Heidi Reszies

Rendezvous

Rising in this early light
I feel the midnight dialogue
And your subdued voice
Still on my cheek,
Your presence
A satin silhouette in my mind.

Elisa Johnson

Un Chien Andalou



housepaint on plywood

Craig Dietz

It's a Keeper

Melissa Moore

The car bounced along the rutted lane, throwing clouds of dust behind, obscuring her view out the back window. Fields grown up in weeds and thistle lay on either side of the roadway. An occasional scrubby cedar or pecan tree stood at the edge of the field. Finally the house came into view, from a distance looking the way it always had, solid and white.

Up close, Irene could tell the difference, as she brought the car to a stop in the side yard. The paint on the house was peeling badly, showing gray boards underneath. The window frames were rotting and one of the venetian blinds sagged like a mouth gaping in surprise. All the shrubs were much bigger than she remembered, sending shoots sprawling in all directions.

Opening the car door and stepping into the knee-high grass, Irene half expected two or three hounds to bound from behind the house and jump on her, wagging their tails and licking her face. The yard was silent except for birds' twittering and chirping in the sycamore, whose bark was peeling almost as much as the house's paint. She slammed the door and moved toward the house in the brittle, dry grass. The grass would be waist-deep if it were not such a dry summer. Irene stepped carefully, watching for copperheads.

The porch steps creaked as she walked up to the long front porch. Several of the floor boards were warped or full of jagged holes. She stood for a moment looking out at the yard and field through the posts. Three clay pots sat near the edge of the porch, their flowers long since dried and shriveled and the dirt baked and cracked. Two rusted hooks in the ceiling remained to show where the swing had hung. The chairs were gone too.

Irene opened her purse and fumbled for the key her father had given her. It rattled in the lock and she turned the knob. As she pushed the door open, stifling hot air hit her, almost taking her breath. The hallway was dark and stuffy. Irene turned on a flashlight and let its beam play throughout the empty room. As the light flickered over a dark square on the wall, she remembered the cheap dime store painting of a mill and stream that always hung in that spot.

Irene walked from room to room, her footsteps echoing in the emptiness. She remembered the furniture that filled each space. Pop's

favorite chair, a tattered recliner, had been hauled away to the dump last year. In the kitchen, she missed the Frigidaire's steady hum and the large white stove where Grandma cooked butter beans like no one else could or ever would be able to. She opened a door and peeked into the bathroom. A dead mouse floated in the commode. She slammed the door and hurried toward the stairs.

Upstairs, the air was more stifling, with a haze of dust added. She moved through the bare rooms until she came to one of the front windows. Irene pushed on the window frame until it slid up with a pop and creak. A warm breeze drifted through the torn screen.

"Hold still, Irene. You can look out the window as soon as I get your hair combed."

"Aw Grandma," she squirmed while her grandmother raked the comb through Irene's long blond hair, stopping short at a tangle.

"Ow!"

"Hold still now."

Irene felt like her scalp was being parted as well when Grandma pushed the comb down the top of her head. Grandma snapped a barrette in place. "There you go."

Irene ran to the window, pulled back the curtains and stood letting the cool summer morning breeze envelop her. Beyond the yard, rows of corn stalks rustled. The aroma of coffee hung in the air from breakfast.

Irene sighed, closed the window and walked out of the empty room.

Downstairs, she went out the back door and sat down on the steps. The clothes line poles leaned as if something had pushed them over. Staring hard, she tried to see if the tire tracks were still on the ground under the pecan tree. But the grass grew high over the spot. She closed her eyes.

Irene ran out the back door and through the dewy, freshly mowed grass regardless of the new tennis shoes her mother had bought for Irene's week-long visit with her grandparents. The doors on the garage were swung open and the six-year-old hurried across the yard and stepped inside the gloomy garage. Pop was standing at his work bench, a single light bulb illuminating the space.

"Hey Pop, what'ya doin'?"

"Fixing your grandma's skillet. The handle's loose."

The garage smelled like old motor oil, engine grease and dog food. Irene stepped over several cartons of soft drink bottles and bent to inspect a pile of bottles in a dusty bushel basket. She picked up a clear bottle whose label read 'Double Cola' in red letters.

"Where'd you get this one Pop?"

"We found that on a dirt road in a ditch. That's rare one. I can't turn it in at the store. Mr. Fraser only takes the ones like Coca-Cola, Pepsi-Cola, and Seven-Up."

"Can I have it? I'll put it in my room at home."

"You'll have to ask your Daddy about that."

Irene put the bottle back in its basket with a clink. She stood up and looked around the garage. It was kind of silly to call it a garage because

Pop never kept the car in it. Instead it was full of tools, garden equipment, bottles, rusty license plates, a thermometer, three sets of deer antlers, two glass telephone pole insulators, numerous arrow heads and an Indian tomahawk—minus the handle.

"You know Pop, if crooks come, all you have to do is put the handle back in the tomahawk and kill 'em."

Pop laughed. "I guess I could." He twisted the skillet to make sure the handle was in place. "There. Let's take this to Grandma now that it's fixed. The we can get ready to go fishing."

After lunch Irene and Pop carried the fishing rods to the car. Pop had a blue-green '65 Plymouth Fury the Irene decided was the biggest car in the world, especially since she had the back seat to herself. Pop picked his hat off the front seat and stuck it on his head, covering his thick, iron gray hair. He ambled over to the back door and called through the screen, "Everybody that's not ready when I am gets left."

"Honest to goodness Roy, I'm hurrying as fast as I can."

Grandma closed the back door and put on her prescription sunglasses. She tied on her straw Chinese hat. She wore loafers, black pants, a paisley shirt, and a sweater draped over her shoulders. She carried a huge black purse and a crossword puzzle book.

"Now we can go," Pop said, "Grandma's got her Coolie hat on."

They got in the car headed down the lane toward the highway.

"Where are we fishin' today Pop?"

"Mill Neck, Irene. I don't think you've ever gone there before."

They drove along the highway for sometime, Pop and Grandma pointing out a big farm or an old store.

"There's you a car, Irene," Pop pointed to a rust covered Ford sitting among the trees next to a delapidated frame house. "Want me to stop for it?"

Irene laughed. As they crossed a bridge she asked, "Is this where we're goin' fishin'?"

"No honey," Grandma said, "that's a ways yet. We'll eat before we get there."

Pop slowed the car and turned off the highway onto a two lane road. "Look for bottles everybody."

Irene stared out the window. This was one of her favorite parts of the trip. Pop and Grandma drove through the country hunting the bottles people threw out of their cars into ditches. Then they'd wash the mud and cobwebs out and take them to the country store for the 2¢ deposit on each bottle.

Grandma turned around, "Don't look sideways out the window, Irene, it'll make you dizzy, look ahead of you."

"Okay."

"Several minutes later Irene called, "Oh I see one. Stop the car Pop."

"No Honey," Grandma said, "I saw it too. It's not a keeper. Those non-returnable bottles will fool you. I have to watch myself, on those."

"Oh."

"We'll find a good one, don't worry."

They drove several miles before Grandma called, "Okay Roy, I saw one."

Pop pulled to the shoulder and got out of the car. He walked several yards behind the car, stooped and sifted through a few leaves. He held the green bottle to light to check for cracks, then walked back to the car. He put the dirt encrusted bottle into a cardboard box in the back seat.

"That was a Fresca. I don't see a whole lot of those often."

About an hour later, they drove into a small town and pulled into the parking lot of a hamburger stand called The Freezer.

Irene rested her elbows on the back of the front seat watching the cars and people. Pop stopped in front of a clump of trees.

"Want to come with me Irene?" he said.

"Yep," Irene opened the door and jumped to the pavement.

Pop leaned on the side of the car. "What do you want, Grandma?"

"Get me a hamburger, everything on it except mustard. Oh Roy, get some more napkins and straws. We're running low in the glove compartment. Better get two orders of french fries so Irene can have her own bag. Let's see . . . I want a Pepsi-Cola . . . a small one."

"Got it."

Irene took her grandfather's hand and walked with him over to the window. She peered through the screen at the woman taking orders. Flies buzzed around the yellow fluorescent tubes that wrapped around the building. A black man in front of them was ordering so their turn would be soon. She watched the people inside flip hamburger patties and wrap the sandwiches in paper.

A roar startled her and she saw a motorcycle glide to a stop at the curb near them. A young man with red hair got off the cycle and stood in line behind them.

Pop pointed to the bike, "Do you think you could ride a motorsicle like that, Irene?"

Irene grinned, "Sure, I bet I could if it had training wheels."

Pop and the motorcycle rider laughed.

The man said, "That's pretty good, little girl."

Pop beamed, "She don't miss a thing, no sir."

The black man received his bag and walked toward his car. Pop stepped to the window.

"What do you want Irene?"

"A hamburger with everything on it and a Pepsi."

"Okay miss, we'll have two hamburgers all the way and one hamburger with everything but mustard. And lets see, three Pepsi-Colas and two bags of french fries."

"Comin' right up," the waitress said, ringing up the order.

As Pop counted the money over the counter, he said, "Irene honey, pull out some napkins and straws for us."

"Okay Pop," she said, going to the dispenser and getting a fistful of napkins. She pulled a bundle of straws from the cup.

"You know Pop. Mama and Daddy never take us to neat places like

this. We haveta go in and sit down. I told 'em it's more fun to eat in the car."

"Well look at it this way, if you always ate at a hamburger joint, then it wouldn't be so much fun any more."

The waitress slid back the screen and handed Pop the bag.

"Thank you, come again," she said, closing the screen.

Irene and Pop walked over to the car. Irene said, "Look Grandma, we got everything." Irene hopped into the back seat.

Grandma opened her purse and pulled out a Wash-n-Dry packet.

"Here Irene, wipe your hands on this cloth before you eat."

Irene rubbed the sticky, soapy towel on her hands and handed it back.

After they'd eaten their hamburgers and french fries, Pop said, "Anybody ready for a tasty-freeze."

"I thought you'd never ask, Roy. I'll take a large."

"I want a kiddie cone, Pop. The big ones melt too fast."

"Okay, we'll be right back."

Pop and Irene came back to the car a few minutes later with the cones. The white cream swirled high above the two cones Pop carried. Irene was already eating her tasty-freeze. Pop handed a cone through the window.

"Better eat on this one fast, Grandma, it's hot today and the stuff wants to melt."

When they finished the cones, Pop started the car and they headed toward the fishing spot. The Plymouth bumped down a dirt road lined with tall pines on either side. The car rumbled across a wooden bridge, and then another. When they came to the next wooden bridge, Pop slowed the car and pulled over to the shoulder. As the dust settled, Pop and Irene got out and opened the trunk. Pop pulled out a fishing rod and a tackle box. Grandma sat in the car, working crossword puzzles.

Irene stood at the rail, watching as Pop slung the rod back and snapped the line toward the water with a whiz. The bait plopped into the water some distance away. Irene watched the circles in the water expand from the bait. Pop slowly wound the reel, bringing the line back through the clear water.

"Can I cast the line once Pop? I promise I won't get it in a tangle like last year."

Pop handed her the pole and let her cast.

They fished almost 30 minutes with no success. Irene watched their distorted reflections waver in the water. She looked at Cypress trees growing at the edge of the stream, a few yards from the bridge.

Pop's whisper pulled her back to the task at hand.

"I think I got 'im. Look at that," he reeled the line quickly and steadily.

Irene said, "Don't let him get away!"

The fish jumped and fluttered as Pop pulled it out of the water and onto the bridge.

Irene jumped away from the rail and ran to the car screaming,

"Grandma! Grandma! He got it! He got it! Pop got a fish!"

Grandma smiled, "Good."

Irene ran back to the bridge, "Oh Pop, I'm so proud of you!"

He laughed and hugged her.

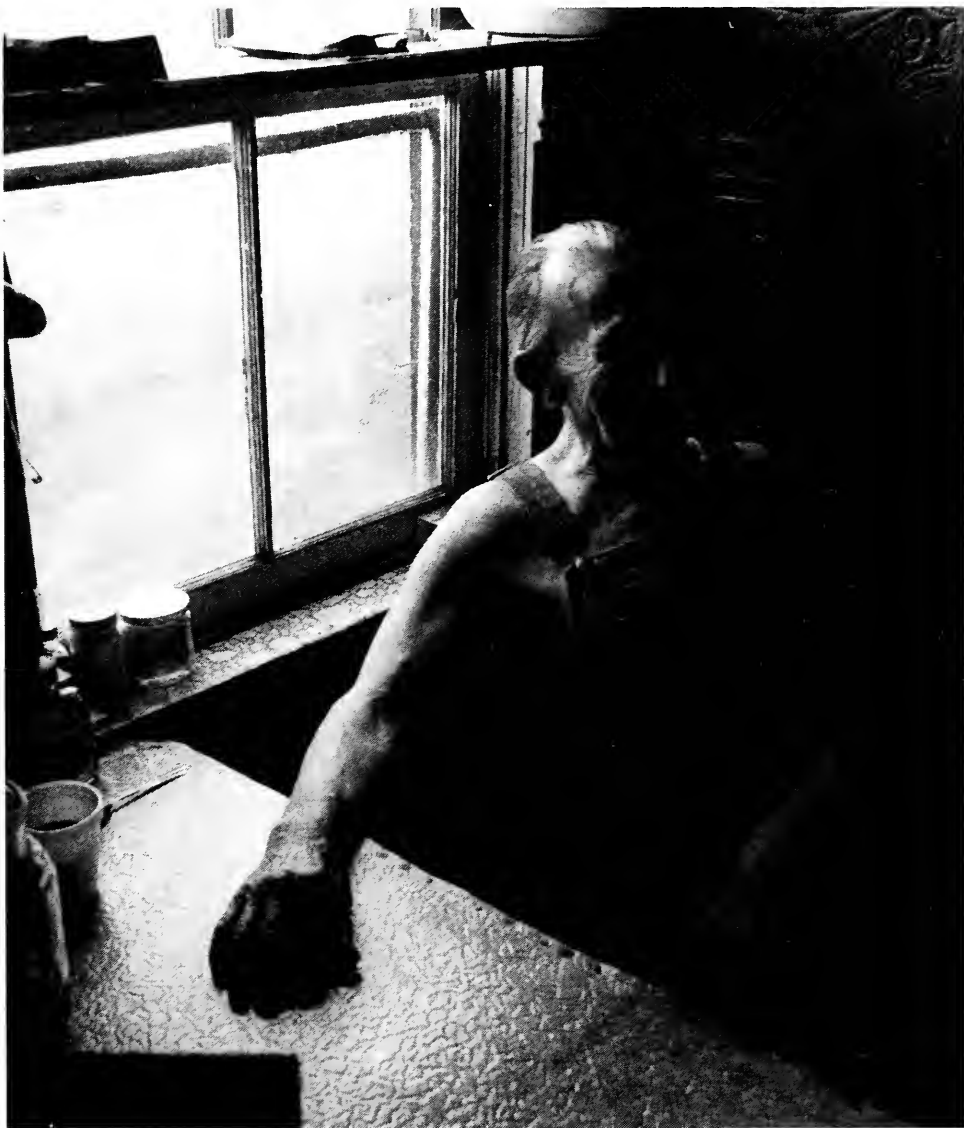
Later the fish was deposited into a cooler and they drove toward the main highway and back home.

Irene called, "Hey Pop, I see one. Stop."

Pop stopped the Plymouth. Irene jumped out and ran down the shoulder until she found the bottle. She picked it out of the ditch. As she brought her find back to the car, she called, "It's a keeper!"

Irene smiled and got up from the back steps. Sweat was dripping off her forehead into her eyes. The heat was more oppressive by the minute. She walked back to her car. She reached in and pulled her camera case off the front seat. She snapped off the case and raised the lens to her face. She lowered the camera after a moment deciding that a photograph now wasn't that important. Putting the camera back on the seat, she got in the car and drove away.

Carl Fox, Keezletown, Virginia



photo

Gary Colson

Amusing

Being mostly a child
Of my time, I grew up inside moviehouses
And too many movies: at the **Arbor** we grew
Acquainted with black and white horrors—
A Wolfman a week with Franky on Friday
Would more than double the features
That let out so late, the real woods
Were but echoes and mirrors; naturally
Now the **Arbor** is down and the woods thin
Along a country-club green—times change,
Of course; the **Admiral**, famed for musicals,
Let us look out on the deck of a ship
With a clouded yellow moon amid the
 moorings,
But it was our youth's unseen admiral
Who advanced our dawning dreams
And sent our cruising hearts a-harboring;
The **Dundee**, wisely devoted to Walt Disney,
Survives for parents with noble Pinocchio
And plaintive Bambi memories to pass on;
Last the poor innercity **Muse**, which bared
The secret glammers of gangsterland and
 rationed
Its fare for many years after on Danish
 hardcore,
Now has posted on its barren masthead
 CLOSED,
And I can but wonder, being mostly a child
Of my time: who runs the **Muse** these days to
 dare
Evict those heroes we were so clearly destined
Never to become?

Daniel A. Dervin

On Passing a War Engraving in a City Park

Happily we inhabit the Midwest where history
Forgot to happen.

When our hometown boys enlisted for
distance,
They were drawn by history's necessary
ingredient
To inscribe on foreign sand their manhood's
prime
Or let others enroll their fuller names
On a primitive stone.

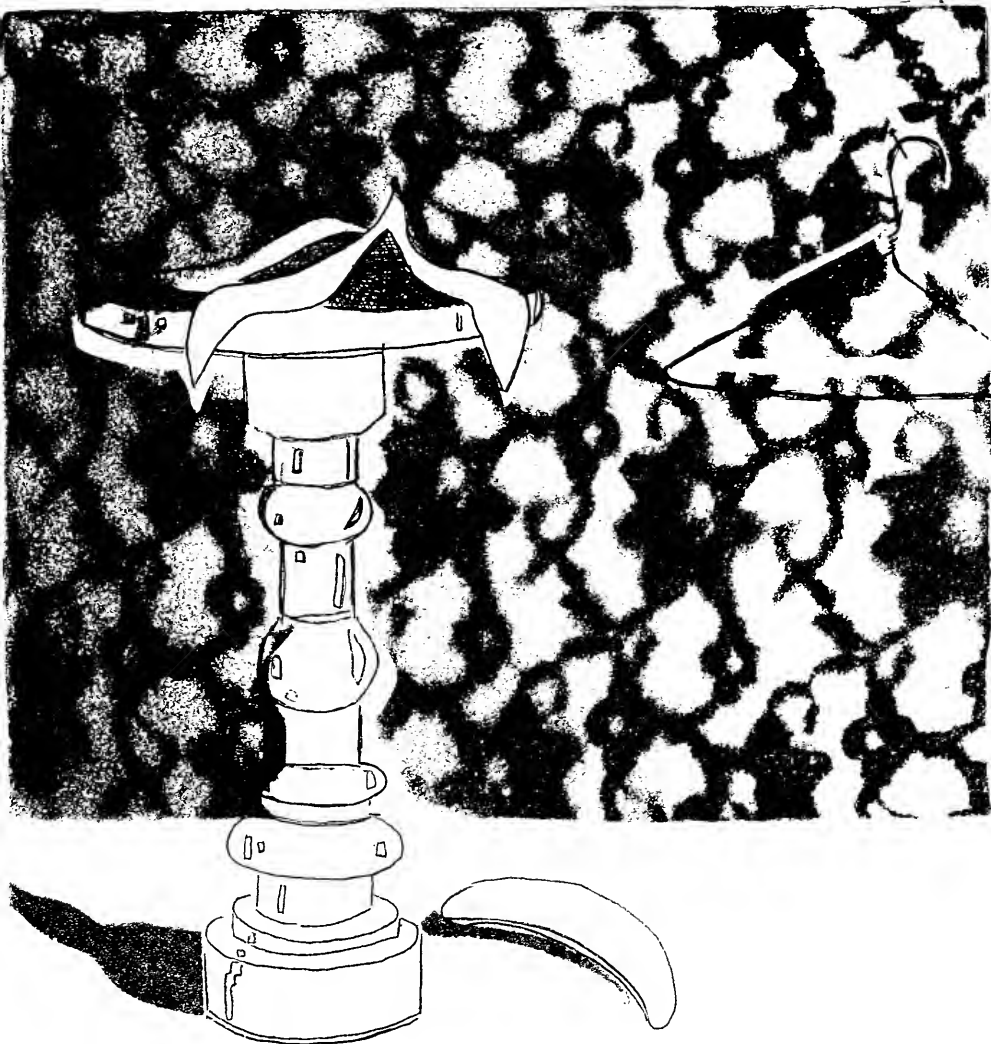
They found in those pretty faroff places
A host of differences from our hometown
houses
Built in a generation that favored
An air of amplitude:
Walkaround porches, ambling orchards,
apron lawns
That let folks carry on with neighbors or
passersby,
And held all amid the sloping apple branches
Continuous as the skies with their day.

These apple-pie American homes shambling
off
So many August avenues, or hometown boys
had inhabited
Or sampled from a Sunday cruising, or Friday
date,
Were maybe plain in comparison, maybe
lacking
The historical consciousness that breeds
More European recipes of ripening, still—

For a hometown aroma those boys would wage
a war or two,
Not seeking overseas dwellings with wooden
shutters
Beyond deep hedges or iron gates,
But rather a remembered air of such great
amplitude
As would bring them home in fine glory
Or final granite.

Daniel A. Dervin

Still Life



intaglio

Heidi Reszies

And Now, To Wait

Once again, the sunlight fades,
Yielding to the dark once more.
(Yet is the dark so black tonight?)

It looks as though the moon is full.
Troubled, brooding with the clouds.
(The wind has kept a steady pace.)

Away, far off, a train has come,
Its direction undiscerned.
(What a quiet, subtle irony.)

Release: one long and lonely wail.
The tone of which has softly changed,
To join the journey of the wind.

And as it rolls into the night,
Snowflakes fall upon themselves.
(Just the whispering of the gods.)

And though the train has long since passed,
The clatter of its wheels remains.
(Faintly keeping time.)

My path is covered by the snow.
And so I'll wait for signs of spring
To find my way back home again.

Mark E. Hilldrup

Richmond, Virginia



photo
1986 Melcher Prize Winner

Gary Colson

Nuclear War is like two warring ant colonies
when a little four year old comes along
and decides that nobody wins.

Brian K. Allen

John Lennon



housepaint on plywood

Craig Dietz

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